Information Technology Resource Management Council (ITRMC)

Idaho Geospatial Committee

Meeting Minutes

(Approved by Committee February 7, 2002)

October 19, 2001

The first Idaho Geospatial Committee meeting was held on Friday, October 19, 2001 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m., in the East Conference Room of the Joe R. Williams Building, Boise, ID.

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME

Liza Fox, Chair, welcomed members and others in attendance and called the meeting to order.

ATTENDANCE

Members Present:

Mr. Nathan Bentley, ITRMC Staff
Sen. Hal Bunderson, Idaho Senate
Mr. Joe Calderwood, USDA Forest Service
Ms. Liza Fox, Transportation Department
Mr. Tracy Fuller, NMD, USGS
Ms. Diane Holloran, Power Engineers
Mr. Mike McDowell, Kootenai County
Mr. Tony Morse, Department of Water Resources
Mr. Frank Mynar, Idaho Power
Mr. Craig Rindlisbacher, Madison County and the City of Rexburg
Ms. Carol Silvers, State Library
*Ms. Janet Cheney, Bonneville County
*Ms. Nina Madry, USDI BLM
*Mr. Jim Szpara, Department of Environmental Quality
*Ms. Lily Wai, University of Idaho

*Designate

Absent Members:

Mr. Dennis Hill, City of Pocatello
Dr. Piotr Jankowski, University of Idaho
Mr. Jonathan Perry, Bureau of Disaster Services
Mr. Frank Roberts, Coeur d'Alene Tribe
Mr. Bill Yeager, USDI BLM

Others Present:

Mrs. Pam Ahrens, Department of Administration
Mr. Mike Beaty, USDI BOR
Ms. Danielle Bruno, Department of Agriculture
Mr. Byron Cochrane, Ada County
Mr. Rich Elwood, ITRMC Staff
Mr. Bill Farnsworth, ITRMC Staff
Ms. Donna Fornshell, USDI BOR
Mr. Don Fournier, ITRMC Staff
Ms. Emily Gales, ITRMC Staff
Mr. Fred Gifford, Maxim Technologies, Inc.
Mr. Bruce Godfrey, University of Idaho Library
Mr. Dave Gruenhagen, Department of Lands
Ms. Karen LaMotte, State Library
Ms. Cindy Lou McDonald, Tax Commission
Mr. Randy Rowell, Transportation Department

BACKGROUND / ITRMC WELCOME

Liza Fox, Idaho Transportation Department, explained that GIS (geographic information systems) coordination activities in Idaho began over twenty years ago. About two years ago, based on recommendations from ITRMC's GIS Task Force, state GIS coordinator and federal framework coordinator positions were created for the state. On April 30, 2001, Governor Dirk Kempthorne signed an executive order that created the IGC. Liza advised the IGC would use Executive Order 2001-07 to guide its actions. Liza then introduced **Nathan Bentley**, State GIS Coordinator.

Nathan informed Committee members and others present of the **December 13-14 IGUM (Idaho Geospatial User's Meeting)** to be held at the MK Plaza, Boise, with the help of the State Tax Commission. Ron Matzner, national FGDC I-Team Coordinator, is the keynote speaker.

Nathan introduced **Pam Ahrens**, Director of the Idaho Department of Administration and Chairman of ITRMC (Information Technology Resource Management Council). Mrs. Ahrens thanked those in attendance for offering their time and expertise. The work being done was continuing a philosophy of ITRMC (created by law in 1996) – to coordinate and work very closely with various levels of government to utilize taxpayers' information technology assets to the fullest, she said. Mrs. Ahrens asked Statewide IT Coordinator **Rich Elwood** to introduce other members of the **ITRMC Staff**, a resource for state and local government. Mr. Elwood introduced Emily Gales, ITRMC Assistant; Bill Farnsworth, IT Policy Analyst; and Don Fournier, IT Policy Analyst.

INTRODUCTIONS

Liza asked members of the Committee to introduce themselves and speak about key issues impacting their represented agencies and stakeholder groups.

Tony Morse, Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR), noted networking connectivity was an important issue.

Diane Holloran, Power Engineers (private sector representative), advised that issues for this stakeholder group were fairly diverse, but stressed that private sector growth is contingent on a successful diverse GIS community in the state.

Carol Silvers, Idaho State Library, said that the clearinghouse concept is very important. She said that making data available to not only agencies, but to the public at large was something the Library was very interested in studying.

Nina Madry, alternate for Bill Yeager (federal representative, USDI Bureau of Land Management), expressed her desire to continue a good working relationship through sharing data with other GIS professionals.

Joe Calderwood, USDA Forest Service, Intermountain Region, Ogden, Utah, represents agencies of the US Department of Agriculture. As part of the IGC, Calderwood's main objectives are framework data, data sharing, data collaboration, and the acquisition of data.

Tracy Fuller, Idaho's Federal Framework Coordinator (US Geological Survey), is interested in coordinating work done between federal groups and the state and local levels to ensure data is available.

Frank Mynar, Idaho Power (private sector representative), advised that in addition to Diane's issues, one overriding concern is that, as far as GIS is concerned, the private sector seemed to be on the outside looking in. Frank will bring forward private sector issues for discussion with IGC members.

Jim Szpara, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) (alternate for Jonathan Perry, Bureau of Disaster Services), advised he had issues with data quality, IT support, funding support, and clearinghouse issues.

Senator Hal Bunderson, whose district was the largest in the state, is an ITRMC member. Senator Bunderson informed the Committee that since ITRMC's inception, the state had moved from a rudimentary direction in IT support to one of the highest what? in the nation. The IGC will be an integral part of the state's future direction. Legislation was needed and the law improved to include technology language, and Bunderson advised he would do all he could to push these processes along once recommendations were brought forth.

Lily Wai, Project Director for INSIDE Idaho (alternate for Piotr Jankowski, University of Idaho), advised her mission as a representative of a higher education institution was mainly with education, training, data clearinghouses and providing service to the public.

Mike McDowell, Kootenai County Assessor's Office (representing local government), advised his primary issues echoed many of those already raised by other Committee members, and agreed the most important issue to deal with was data, specifically its accessibility, portability and stability. The need to more effectively integrate and better utilize data is becoming a big issue at the county level.

Craig Rindlisbacher, City of Rexburg and Madison County, (representing local government), advised communication between local governments was critical to future successes. Local government GIS users had voiced two other issues: data distribution (liability) and privacy.

Janet Cheney, Bonneville County, alternate for Dennis Hill, City of Pocatello, (representing local governments), said that cities and counties are using taxpayer money to create data, would like guidance and direction on standardized formats to ensure that data could be shared with other levels of government.

As a representative of state agencies, **Liza** said, there was a general feeling among GIS professionals that Idaho codes, rules and regulations they must operate under did not necessarily reflect the technology and where it is today. The state agencies would like IGC to look at the Idaho codes and regulations, and make recommendations to ITRMC on how they could be carried forward. It was also the understanding of GIS professionals that up to that point, ITRMC really focused on hardware and software issues in the state, and not on data issues. Data was a key issue that needed to be addressed by the IGC in the near future.

MISSION STATEMENT AND BYLAWS FOR THE IGC

Executive Order 2001-07 stipulates the IGC will prepare a written and oral report, including Committee bylaws, to ITRMC by December 31, 2001.

After a review of the draft bylaws, several suggestions were made by committee members to amend and alter items in the bylaws before adoption.

MOTION TO ACCEPT BYLAWS AS AMENDED

Mike McDowell made a motion to accept the IGC Bylaws as amended, with ratification of the final product at the next IGC meeting, Carol Silvers seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

ITRMC (Information Technology Resource Management Council)

Rich Elwood provided a brief update on ITRMC activities. The legislation that created ITRMC (a sixteen-member council consisting of legislators and representatives of the private sector, higher education, and major state agencies) gave it the authority and responsibility to coordinate enterprise-wide IT infrastructure, which includes GIS. The Council is charged with developing standards, policies and guidelines with the goal of simplifying, sharing, and making government IT more efficient. The ITRMC Staff provides a service to state agencies by providing research and consulting capabilities. (More information on ITRMC is available at www2.state.id.us/itrmc/).

The **Idaho IT Plan** is made up of **five opportunities**: implement 'one government'; leverage information technology as a strategic asset; provide secure access and confidentiality; expand participation in digital government; and recruit and retain a proficient IT workforce. Our **ultimate goal** is to bring citizens together and closer to their government; to transform digital-governance to fit the needs of today's emerging new citizen, one who is not only a consumer of government services, but also a shareholder of government, said Elwood. In order to make this happen ITRMC has adopted fifteen policies, nine standards, and one guideline during the last quarter. To review these IT policies, standards and guidelines, see: http://www2.state.id.us/itrmc/stateplan/stateplan_index.htm.

The State IT Plan can be found at http://www2.state.id.us/itrmc/stateplan/it_plan.htm. ITRMC intends to adopt policies and guidelines regarding geospatial-related standards, and the Staff is looking forward to recommendations from IGC, said Elwood.

DEVELOPMENT OF GIS RECOMMENDATIONS

Nathan focused on policies that Rich Elwood had referred to regarding geospatial-related standards: **ITRMC IT Enterprise Standards 4000, Geospatial Applications**.

Category 4100 - references GIS server software,
Category 4110 - applies to software to be loaded on independent (client) machines,
Category 4200 - addresses the need to identify a standard for data sharing.

The IGC should specify other issues that need to be addressed with regard to enterprise standards, i.e. remote sensing applications or global positioning system use.

Currently, there are multiple GIS software being used throughout the state i.e. ESRI, Autodesk, Intergraph. There needed to be just one state standard, said Nathan. If that was not the direction the IGC wanted to go, a recommendation, including explanation, needed to be forwarded to ITRMC for review. Tony Morse agreed to co-chair a standards subcommittee, with Nathan, to address this issue.

Mike McDowell inquired as to why one standard application was necessary, as it might be appropriate to adopt multiple applications, ensuring they would be capable of transforming the data into a common, accessible, and portable data type. Also, Craig Rindlisbacher questioned the importance/relevance of establishing standards. Nathan advised the establishment of standards was cost-effective for the state, reduced the learning curve for those shifting from one agency to another, and basically facilitated economics. Joe Calderwood mentioned his organization operated Intergraph, ESRI and desktop publishing systems, and each one of those tools possessed particular strengths for particular applications. The Forest Service had continued to maintain three different processes within the small unit in which Joe worked, and the Forest Service had imposed similar pressures to move toward one standard application (ESRI). He agreed a subcommittee should be formed to address integration of portability using existing systems, costs and efficiencies. Joe also added that, from Nathan's introduction, he saw the possibility of the formation of several subcommittees to address a statewide platform and standards for data. Nathan, however, envisioned one subcommittee to address all issues that fell under ITRMC IT Enterprise Standards 4000, i.e. remote sensing applications, GPS (global positioning software) standards, data standards, etc. The role of such a subcommittee would be to assist in the development of draft standards for these areas. Nathan suggested a software standard be prepared for ITRMC review by its December 7th meeting.

Craig stated that the subcommittee should go beyond the cost issue and look at the broader benefits to the GIS community.

Joe asserted that the state would have to examine how its GIS data would integrate with the different data formats other organizations could be using, regardless of the platform chosen. It was a good starting point to look at how to build the platform from the data structures up toward the system, he said.

Fred Gifford pointed out that ITRMC standards would not have any implication on several groups in the GIS community. He advised, though, that the Committee should be looking at relevant data-level standards to ensure interoperability between the systems.

Mike advised that data – and how it was moved from one platform to another – was the primary issue. Also, it was helpful to adopt standards in order to choose a direction to take in order to most effectively use resources already in place. He inquired as to the effect/impact of establishing a standard, and what it would mean to an agency not currently using it. Nathan responded that ITRMC has established a **two-year implementation timeline** and also an **exception process** for state agencies.

Senator Bunderson added that technology was clearly migrating, and so if a reasonable objective were carefully thought out, people would migrate to it over time. Of course, if there were credible reasons not to take action, an agency's exception request would be considered. Nathan added statewide policies, standards and guidelines allowed for understanding by other entities working with state agencies of how best to work with the state.

MOTION TO ESTABLISH IGC GEOSPATIAL APPLICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Tony Morse moved and Nathan Bentley seconded a motion to establish the IGC Geospatial Applications Subcommittee to address how to approach issues pertaining to ITRMC IT

Enterprise Standards 4000, Geospatial Applications, with Tony Morse and Nathan Bentley as Co-chairs, and the motion passed unanimously.

Any recommendations for the Geospatial Applications Subcommittee should be forwarded to Tony Morse (208 327-7997, tmorse@idwr.state.id.us).

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) UPDATES

Tracy Fuller advised that in the draft IGC bylaws, six of the eight basic federal data framework teams were identified: cadastral, geodetic control, hydrography, landuse/landcover, ortho-imagery, and transportation. He gave a brief account of current activities of the TWGs.

Ortho-imagery TWG: preliminary meetings have been held; Bruce Godfrey (UI) and Bill Kramber (IDWR), acting co-chairs. INSIDE Idaho (http://inside.uidaho.edu/) is developing some nice ways to serve and distribute any kind of satellite imagery, including LANDSAT and SPOT 10-meter data, and full state coverage from several years should be available soon.

With regard to the one-meter DOQ (Digital Ortho-photo Quadrangles) program, there was a large section of Idaho where there was no one-meter data. Federal funding for the basic NAPP (National Aerial Photography Program), which was intended to support ortho-photography development, is decreasing. The question, then, is how to fund and produce imagery for DOQs in the future. Joe Calderwood added that, due to different processes being introduced into the NAPP, another cycle of NAPP imagery as states have known in the past (where federal agencies purchase imagery for union states in a seven-year cycle) might not be seen again. The last imagery cycle for the State of Idaho was in 1998. The Farm Service Agency, a major contributor, had pulled its funding out, he said.

The IGC needs to evaluate funding sources it could come up with to lure these federal dollars into the state for its photography effort. The USFS is in the process of obtaining ortho-photography control, and it would provide the ground control to the state. The USFS could also provide production of the ortho-photography; what was lacking was the imagery. Perhaps a subcommittee could look at this issue, said Calderwood. Liza advised it was anticipated that the chairs of the TWGs would make presentations based on proposals regarding collaborative purchases to benefit all in the GIS community. Joe added that some of the programs would need local, state and federal partnerships to identify a large area and provide service to the entire state.

Mike McDowell advised that Kootenai County had a large area covered in 6" pixel resolution of color ortho-imagery (updated this year), and wondered if it was possible to leverage existing ortho-imagery such as this. Liza advised the issue of charging for licensed data also needed to be looked at, and encouraged members to participate in all the TWGs to address these issues.

Transportation TWG: currently chaired by Randy Rowell (ITD). This group has been meeting on a regular basis, and there were some good pilot projects through ITD looking at integrating county and state transportation data. The Bureau of Transportation Standards and the US Census Bureau were in collaboration to try to develop a data content model and geospatial accuracy standards. According to the US Census Bureau, with support from USGS and Bureau of Transportation Standards, a very strong push would be made to collect local data for use in modern TIGER/Line® data by 2006. This would be an opportunity for the IGC to push its data up into those agencies. The return benefit would be that the census information integrates with other state data.

Hydrography TWG: currently co-chaired by Linda Davis and Sandy Thiel (IDWR). Tracy said that the USFS was pouring millions of dollars into the national hydro-data set model. Tracy believes there will be full basin-wide coverage for the state within two-three years.

Cadastral and Geodetic Control TWG, currently co-chaired by Dave Williamson (Kootenai County) and Tom Spenser (BLM), has been meeting on a regular basis. Last year, they developed a draft cadastral plan after attending the Cadastral Data and Policy Forum sponsored by the Western Governors' Association and the US BLM. The plan was presented to ITRMC in December 2000.

Landuse/landcover TWG – Bill Kramber (IDWR) is acting chair. There is no current activity.

There is no TWG for **elevation** at this time. Yet, full ten-meter coverage of the entire state would be available by the end of 2002, said Tracy.

A lot of interest had been expressed in **governmental units**, but there had been no meetings regarding such. With homeland defense becoming more critical, a lot of the districts usually not thought of may become very critical i.e. water and sewer, zoning, emergency, fire, said Tracy.

Schedules and agendas for TWG meetings will be posted on ITRMC's IGC web site.

MOTION TO RATIFY CURRENT TWG CHAIRS

Diane Holloran moved and Mike McDowell seconded a motion to ratify the following IGC Technical Working Group chairs: imagery – Bruce Godfrey and Bill Kramber; transportation – Randy Rowell; hydrography – Linda Davis and Sandy Thiel; Cadastral and Geodetic Control – Dave Williamson and Tom Spencer; and landuse/landcover – Bill Kramber.

Gene Thorly (USGS, Seattle), has organized a meeting in Portland on November 14, 2001, and invited members of the three GIS councils/committees of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The USGS is offering funding for up to ten IGC members or designees; the IGC would be given thirty minutes on the agenda. Several subjects would be discussed, including coordination among states in the northwest region, the I-Team Initiative (including financial elements), and data-serving. The Geodata Alliance would also be represented. Those interested should contact Liza (208 334-8222, lifox@itd.state.id.us).

GEOSPATIAL DATA CLEARINGHOUSE DISCUSSION

Liza asked Nathan to lead the discussion on a statewide geospatial data clearinghouse. Nathan noted that there are a number of great sites available in the state: INSIDE Idaho, various IMS (Internet map server) sites (IDWR, DEQ).

Access Idaho

Nathan introduced **Bill Farnsworth**, ITRMC IT Policy Analyst, to speak about **accessidaho.org**. Bill explained that accessidaho.org was the state's homepage and beyond, an electronic front door to

on-line government services for the citizens of Idaho. Accessidaho.org was designed as a one-stop shop, and links from the site went beyond state Web sites – an enterprise-wide solution. The structure was designed around function – not around how government was structured – and went across federal, state and local boundaries. The Access Idaho project was a public/private partnership, and the winning bidder was Idaho Information Consortium (IIC), which was wholly owned by the National Information Consortium (NIC). NIC was also involved with about twelve other state portals, which was helpful for the development of new on-line projects in Idaho. IIC had just one customer, the State of Idaho. They were conveniently located in downtown Boise, and all equipment was maintained at that location. The site had been up and running for about a year and a half, and the Access Idaho network infrastructure had already underwent two major upgrades. The portal was self-funded (no up-front costs) and transaction-based (convenience/transaction fees used to fund it). Bill is the chair of the state oversight committee, the Access Idaho Steering Committee.

Basic guidelines were being developed to assist agencies with web page development/design. Access Idaho also hoped to provide a template for use by agencies, if desired. Bill said that Access Idaho would entertain recommendations from the IGC.

Request for Information

Nathan then requested information on the different data-sharing sites available. Lily Wai advised **INSIDE Idaho** as a three-year project was nearing its end. There is a permanent GIS Specialist position in place at the University of Idaho, but funding for the project ends this year. Servers for INSIDE Idaho are located at the University of Idaho Library. Its audience includes the general public, local, state and federal agencies, K-12, and higher education. Lily said that INSIDE Idaho works as a facilitator for the distribution of data and services from different agencies with a seamless interface, along with providing technical support. They also hope to provide the core datasets, such as base maps. Lily introduced Bruce Godfrey ("the backbone of the project") and Fred Gifford (Consultant, Maxim Technologies, Inc.).

Bruce Godfrey explained INSIDE Idaho was recently involved in the redistricting project with the Commission on Redistricting. Those involved with the INSIDE Idaho project had also worked to make LANDSAT 7 and LANDSAT 5 data available on the site, where UI and IDWR had contributed images. (This information was also available through any UI Library system catalogue.) They were working with Idaho NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) to make the thirty-one state-certified digital soil surveys available for access. In November, UI will obtain a hardware upgrade for the INSIDE Idaho project, which was expected to dovetail with an interactive GIS application on the site.

Fred Gifford mentioned he understood the clearinghouse referenced in Executive Order 2001-07 would be *the distributed* clearinghouse for as many groups as possible to share data based on a common standard. He and others were very interested in the INSIDE Idaho project being a service for facilitating that sharing process, providing technical support for setting up the technology and adhering to the data-sharing standards, including: the essential metadata standard; and a new web mapping standard (for facilitating maps over the Internet) being promoted by FGDC (Federal Geographic Data Committee), USGS, and OGC (Open GIS Consortium). UI received a grant to build a web mapping system that adheres to that standard. The system allows the integration of maps with metadata through a search engine, and would bring up an interactive map of the data. Also, data from multiple servers could be combined to form one map in a web browser, a powerful and

important concept. Jeff Mathews, LCSC (Lewis-Clark State College), received a metadata training grant; six to eight metadata training sessions would be provided throughout the state in 2002.

To be a part of a clearinghouse, **standards** that must be complied with include a search engine standard (Z39.50 – US national standard defining a protocol for computer- to-computer information retrieval that was first adopted in 1988) and the FGDC metadata standard. These two standards could now be integrated with the new web mapping standard. There were already portals in place allowing the search of multiple clearinghouse nodes. There could be another portal optimized for searching only Idaho data, and the FGDC and others were releasing a lot of new technologies to facilitate the searching process. There is a national portal available for searching multiple clearinghouse nodes using one search criteria. The problem in Idaho, said Gifford, was that INSIDE Idaho was the only spatial information data engine site adhering to the standards.

The long-term role of INSIDE Idaho is as a service to help people adhere to federal standards and implement the technology for data sharing. INSIDE Idaho could also serve data for those who may not wish to invest in those tools locally.

Dave Gruenhagen, Department of Lands (Lands), advised Lands was working on developing an IMS site. Lands' data is currently available through a map objects interface.

IDWR had established an IMS site. Tony Morse advised IDWR data was also available via the state FTP (file transfer protocol) site and a web interface. A number of ArcIMS applications were also running, including one hosted for the Idaho OnePlan (Department of Agriculture).

Subcommittee Proposal

Nathan has received several requests as to where state digital data could be accessed. A subcommittee needed to be organized to address where the state site should be located and what information should be included. Nathan suggested that the subcommittee look at the clearinghouse function, interaction with existing organizations, directions, and representation on accessidaho.org.

MOTION TO ESTABLISH IGC CLEARINGHOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE

Tony Morse moved and Lily Wai seconded a motion to establish the IGC Clearinghouse Subcommittee to identify the role and functions of – and promote – a statewide GIS clearinghouse (in accordance with Executive Order 2001-07 and IGC Bylaws), with Frank Roberts and Carol Silvers as Co-chairs, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jim Szpara and Lily Wai expressed interest in serving on the Clearinghouse Subcommittee.

EMERGING ISSUES

Five-year Tax Commission IT Plan

Cindy Lou McDonald (GIS Manager, Idaho State Tax Commission) explained that she was approached by the state Tax Commissioners to address the issue of **how GIS could be used throughout the Commission**. She added that Tax's GIS department was staffed with four people, with a very limited role in the organization. McDonald composed a proposal of a five-year plan, starting in July 2002. The commissioners decided the idea had merit, but the approval of the IGC and ITRMC was needed. The state Tax Commission was finishing up a three-year project to convert all of its tax software into an SQL (Structured Query Language – a database query language that was adopted as an industry standard in 1986) server database. In theory, data analysis in the Tax Commission should be easier than ever because one [SQL] database would be shared. However, there was a 'hole' in that database, she said. Further, there was no available statewide database of updated digital private land – the most important land from the Commission's point of view because that was where the most people lived and it generated most of the tax dollars in Idaho. Because there was no private land mapped or available in the state, Tax's ability to conduct statewide analysis was hampered. Data could not be tracked any finer than the ZIP code level. In addition, it was not possible to locate businesses or people affected by a city boundary, an urban renewal area, an Indian reservation, an enterprise zone, or a tax code area. That geography was critical for Tax to be able to link existing databases together in order to perform data mining. That surface ownership was important and cost millions of dollars to build. However, the counties had already invested millions of dollars and thousands of hours over the last ten years to begin building a digital database.

Therefore, Tax was proposing a partnership using the Internet and/or an intranet. Tax, in cooperation with other state agencies, would be able to warehouse cadastral and private parcel data for use by the counties and state agencies for internal purposes. As an extension of that, perhaps some kind of restricted use by the public could be allowed in the future. The main concern, though, was that the Commission be able to function as an agency. If this was done, efforts and software would be streamlined, counties would save money as they continued to build a private land database, and state agencies would avoid any duplication of effort, as all these entities needed the parcel data. It was anticipated there would be one source for maintained cadastral and parcel data.

One responsibility of the Commission's GIS team was to train and assist county assessors and mappers in keeping their plat maps updated. The Commission offered a number of classes, was in daily contact with a variety of counties, and regularly traveled to counties to assist with parcel mapping efforts. The Tax Commission had the largest financial revenue and address database in the state, had some capability to coordinate land database, and was interested in investing in GIS to correct the errors in the state tax code areas/districts and county taxation databases (there was no way of checking its tax code maps and districts against the parcel database to ensure the correct people were paying taxes to the correct districts) – fair and equitable taxation. This would also allow the Commission to search for businesses and persons not currently benefiting from circuit breaker and other tax relief programs, and to meet federal regulations for address and tax code searching, especially in the area of cell phone taxation. It would also assist the legislature (members of the legislature often approached the Tax Commission with questions regarding the financial impact of proposed bills on the state and citizens), and streamline the Commission's collection and auditing methods (collectors would be assigned as specialists in specific collection areas instead of by ZIP code).

Some of the steps proposed in the five-year plan were: to create a committee to address data standards; to decide what those standards were; and to design methodology for resolving any conflicts in the data received, for filling holes in areas with no digital parcel data, and for how to go about maintaining those updates. A geocoding (the process of searching database records for addresses, ZIP Codes and other geographic information, and assigning latitude and longitude coordinates) engine would need to be built to assign geographic points with X/Y coordinates to all spatial data in the Tax Commission. The Commission would need to be gathering county, spatial, and tabular data, geodetic control, ortho-photography, and any other data that needed to be gathered. A clearinghouse to serve the data would need to be built. For continual improvements, a staff would need to be assembled to begin designing the applications and procedures, (the parcel land database changes every day). The Commission hoped that, as the geodetic control was improved, the parcels would also move with the control, and a system would need to be built for that. A team to design applications to assist different departments (income tax, sales tax, corporate tax) to use the database would also be needed. Another part of the proposal was the ability to conduct training and presentations on the system throughout state agencies, state research staff, legislators, and county staff.

The privacy issue was a very large one for the counties, and at the August 2001 assessor's conference, the mapping committee had assembled a subcommittee to deal with privacy and data sharing issues. All of those issues were still ahead of the Tax Commission. Ownership information was needed to make it all work. The Commission's legal staff was then researching a data sharing agreement, and preliminary research had indicated that a relationship between the counties and state agencies might allow for the counties to release parcel data with what was deemed critical information for confidential, internal use by state agencies (without a requirement to also disseminate that information to the public).

The Tax Commission was moving forward with further commitments to the project in the GenTax® [the first commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software designed specifically for revenue jurisdictions] arena. The week of October 8th, the Commission's IT Steering Committee and ESRI prioritized GIS throughout the Tax Commission as a high-priority project for a new programming interface between GenTax® and ESRI GIS products on the SQL server geodatabase housed at Tax. Work on this interface and writing the programs for GIS to be including throughout the Commission was expected to begin in the spring of 2002. If the five-year plan were to be approved by that time, the soonest the plan could proceed would be July 2003. An investment in the GIS partnership with the counties would reap benefits for the Tax Commission for quality control to meet federal regulations and as an effective research tool.

Discussion

Tracy Fuller noted that, at the federal level, wildfire implications were a big issue being looked at. Limited access to parcel data by fire managers/professionals (in addition to counties and state agencies) should also be considered. This would allow for federal support and potential funding.

With regard to privacy, Mike McDowell advised of an existing paradox in Idaho law: one section of code stated that all parcel data/records were public records; another section of code stated that it was a misdemeanor, finable by $1,000 per occurrence, to release parcel data in any form that would allow an automated search to provide addresses and/or phone numbers for any type of solicitation purpose. Mike agreed that parcel data was critical information for many reasons, and was something that had to be maintained in the assessor's office by law.

Craig Rindlisbacher posed a question of whether a state agency was required to release such information. According to preliminary research performed by the Commission's legal staff, under the Freedom of Information Act or any other, the Commission would not be required to disseminate the data if it was used for internal use by the state agencies.

Lily Wai mentioned county and tabular data could be provided on the Internet, but not data pertaining to personal property. **Byron Cochran** (Ada County) advised it was decided at Ada County to provide property addresses on the Internet, with no indication as to whether they were owned or occupied. Outside of Idaho, owner names were provided on the Internet, but were not searchable.

Danielle Bruno, Department of Agriculture, noted this might be a case where the law had not caught up with the technology.

Cindy Lou McDonald had visited thirty-nine of the forty-four counties, and had received about ninety percent consensus that they had no problem sharing parcel data with the Tax Commission for the purpose of improving Idaho's tax code maps and districts. (It was yet to be seen as to whether the counties approved of the Tax Commission sharing the information with other state agencies.) She did suspect, though, that some legislation was needed with regard to the privacy issue.

The Tax Commission was not looking at mapping the parcels for the counties, but was interested in setting up a way to distribute the information through a clearinghouse. Mike McDowell suggested there was room within this model to work through a portal and serve a lot of data; others may need to have a warehouse.

MOTION TO REQUEST THAT THE CADASTRAL TWG MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO IGC REGARDING THE IDAHO STATE TAX COMMISSION'S FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Mike McDowell moved and Janet Cheney seconded a motion to request a recommendation be brought forth by the IGC Cadastral Technical Working Group with regard to the Idaho State Tax Commission's five-year IT plan, and the motion passed unanimously.

IT/GIS Integration

Craig Rindlisbacher believes one of the challenges to making GIS useful in local governments is **communication between GIS professionals and the local governments they work for**. Up to this point, there has been no forum for dealing with that communication, he said. Though there had been several attempts (technical support staff from the Tax Commission, Assessor's Mapping Committee, regional groups, annual URISA conference, IMS sites) to overcome the problem, each had fallen short of a comprehensive, sustained forum tied to other coordination efforts. The second group of issues that was really vexing and troublesome to the local governments was the **privacy concern and the related data access and distribution issues**, said Craig. This issue was very complex, not understood and needed to be driven at the policy level. He suggested the development of a white paper or subcommittee to address the issue. Lastly, Craig spoke to **IT integration**. He defined 'IT' as a way of thinking, using open architecture, non-proprietary systems, relational database principles, etc, and felt it necessary to integrate IT principles into GIS, especially at the local level.

As an example he described the following: By state statute, Idaho counties were required to identify and subdivide a parcel when it had undergone a fifth split. Planning and zoning departments were

taking care of that, but needed to know when that fifth split happened. As it stood, there was no automated way in taxation systems to deal with this. Hand drawn maps were used in the past to determine the number of splits a parcel had, and in the current system of attributes, there was no way of tracking what was going on. Part of the problem was that it was a multi-layered operation, and the GIS data structure had to be changed to maintain history. Local governments needed ways of dealing with those kinds of day-to-day problems, and Craig saw a solution to this issue in the new geodatabase model. GIS professionals needed to educate themselves on IT issues/principles, he said. An understanding of these issues is difficult when approached in a piecemeal way. He felt that the formation of the IGC is a positive step toward dealing with the needed coordination.

Workflow Study

Mike McDowell (Chief Deputy Assessor, Kootenai County) spoke of a workflow study being conducted by Kootenai County. The County Assessors' office is charged by law with maintaining one of the largest land databases that related to all property characteristics (name, owner, address, structure and land use in place, size of parcel, amount of frontage, road access, etc.) that existed throughout Idaho.

Mike provided information on systems in use at Kootenai County. Kootenai County began in 1980 with a system imported from Oregon that has been modified in-house over the years to meet both internal and statutory needs. The hardware was upgraded in the mid-1990's and is still in use for the county's primary assessment and tax administration systems. Parts for the mini-computer are no longer made (since around 1996).

The county also houses a fairly developed PC-based GIS system, which has been developed over the past seven years between the Assessor's Office, the Planning Department and the GIS Division. Regarding internal IT Integration with GIS, Mike advised Kootenai County's three-person GIS Division functioned effectively (and budgetarily) under the county Information Systems (IS) Department. In terms of practice, they are distributed based upon need. At this point, no conflict between the groups had been seen.

In 1998, Kootenai County formed a GIS consortium with most major cities within the county, two utilities (Avista and Kootenai Electric Cooperative), University of Idaho, and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. Panhandle Area Council Of Governments was used as a facilitator. A great deal of information is now shared across agency boundaries. The cities adopted the county's parcel maps as the basis for mapping city properties, and now could have access to downloaded name and address information. This allowed an immediate efficiency to be gained, and showed that data sharing can be facilitated between government agencies.

Also in use is a PC-based imaging system (PaperClip software). All of the county's assessment records are now digital images stored on a laser-disk jukebox, with access via the internal network. The county also uses ProVal, a PC-based Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA)software package.

The county's internal NT-based network provides support for the ProVal, mapping/GIS and scanning applications. An HP (Hewlett-Packard) system is used for the county's financial information and the Recorder's database for recorded documents, whereas a PICK Operating System is used on the McDonnel Douglas minicomputer for assessment and tax administration systems.

In order for the county to migrate to an updated system for assessment and tax administration, and to identify needs for linking data between systems, the county needs to identify workflow processes, and document them in a way that could be used as base documentation for analysis of replacement systems, or the development of a new system. The data itself (of course) is the most critical piece of the system; how to secure it, ensure others can use it, how to facilitate use and coordination with other departments, etc.

Once department-by-department documentation is completed, the workflow processes of the other departments will be analyzed as a group to identify and assess common and disparate needs that the new system will have to satisfy. Options/alternatives will then be determined. One option may be to partner with the Tax Commission - Tax is considering a proposal made by GenTax to devise a system that would support those counties in which the Commission currently provides IBM AS400 system support (assessment taxes only). Mike felt the timing was very good for Kootenai County to perform this kind of base system analyses in order to re-engineer its direction and to best optimize its resources.

Kootenai County needs information from state and federal agencies, said Mike. The county also has some fairly accurate information that would most likely benefit state and federal agencies, as well as the organizations currently exchanging information. The county is very proud of the quality of its information in terms of parcel boundaries. The conversion of the parcel maps from scanned image files to AutoCAD files is approximately 96% complete. Once complete, the information will then be converted from AutoCad (lines) to a shape file format (polygons) that is an open-file format.

Consistent with the State Tax Commission GIS proposal, Mr. McDowell hopes that the county will be able to transfer parcel and tax code area boundary information electronically to the State Tax Commission, and the STC can then conduct quality control checks, as a way to reduce redundancy.

Mike felt the timing was very good for Kootenai County to perform this kind of base system analyses in order to re-engineer its direction and to best optimize its resources.

Discussion

Craig Rindlisbacher and Marilyn Rasmussen (Chair, Idaho Association of Counties' Technology Team) had spoken with Cindy Lou McDonald regarding the Tax Commission funding a workflow study on how GIS data could and should be used and moved through the counties, Craig said. The initial reaction they had received from the Tax Commission was that the study would be very similar to McDonald's mandate, and the Commission was charged with taxation and assessment. Yet, Cindy Lou did not feel they would receive support for funding to do such an effort through her staff.

Liza believes the issue was much broader than just GI Committee issues, and that it should be addressed at an ITRMC level. She recommended Mike McDowell give a similar presentation to ITRMC to discuss the need for a county workflow study. Mike mentioned the assessors had worked with Senator Hal Bunderson on occasion, providing him with reports/queries of data for legislative use and he agreed to talk with Nathan regarding an ITRMC presentation.

Federal Standards and Compliance

Joe Calderwood presented a copy of **Presidential Executive Order 12906** (Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access: The National Spatial Data Infrastructure) signed by President Clinton on April 11, 1994.

Joe stated that data compatibility is a very big issue, and the fact that Idaho's GIS professionals were coordinating amongst themselves to create data and cooperatively reproduce what was important. He added that it was essential for the IGC to ensure instruments were in place whereas to collaboratively produce and share data. The federal community had created some framework layers: elevation, hydrography, geodetic control, cadastral, transportation, government units, and digital ortho-imagery. The seven standard framework themes were presented by the FGDC. The Forest Service also approved a list of core layers: roads and trails, water, land survey, terrestrial topography, vegetation, wildlife, range, cultural properties, recreation, and fire.

The Office of Management and Budget has taken a look at how data is being acquired government-wide and duplication of efforts, etc. In response to these efforts, the OMB set up the I-Team (geospatial implementation plan) initiative, an opportunity for states to present plans of how basic framework data themes were being collected and shared. This initiative is being promoted state by state. Joe presented the ***Utah Framework Implementation Team Plan**. Utah's plan is being used as a template for other states. Joe read some outline items from the document, and promoted the structured organization of Utah's plan. He proposed the outline be used as a charter to produce an outline for each of IGCs TWGs.

Joe suggested that an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) should included Idaho's themes (when identified), as well as other issues: financial, standards and a clearinghouse. As a federal partner, a document such as the MOU was very essential to his agency, and indicated authorization to work within the state. Also, it could lead to – and be tied into – an I-Team, and be an instrument to enable the creation of an Idaho framework implementation plan.

Nathan advised Ron Matzner had been contacted regarding Idaho's desire to participate in the I-Team Initiative.

*****The Utah Framework Implementation Team Plan: http://agrc.its.state.ut.us/i_team/iteam_final.htm.

Joe requested the Committee adopt the eight standard framework themes developed by the FGDC, and work toward the development of a statewide plan for framework geographic data themes. Tracy Fuller supported the idea of the development of an implementation team plan for each Technical Working Group for IGC review. Joe advised Idaho's adoption of the FGDCs standard themes would make life easier for those in the federal community. **Randy Rowell** said he had looked over the FGDC transportation theme, that it was a great minimum beginning standard, and that the IGC should at least meet these minimum FGDC standards. Joe suggested a motion to request the TWGs address the development of framework themes using I-Team structure.

MOTION TO ADOPT UTAH FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION TEAM PLAN OUTLINE

Craig Rindlisbacher moved and Diane Holloran seconded a motion to adopt the theme outline section of the Utah Framework Implementation Team Plan, and the motion passed unanimously.

Migration of IDTM (Idaho Transverse Mercator) to NAD83

Tony Morse offered information on the conversion of NAD27 to NAD83. There were a number of reasons for the conversion:

- **consistency** – federal agencies were required to use NAD83; 44 of the 50 US states were required by law to use NAD83, including Montana and Oregon; a piece of Idaho code required surveyors in Idaho to use NAD83;
- **original intent** of Wayne Valentine , LS, PE, creator of IDTM – In Valentine's *A Plane Coordinate System for Geographic Information in Idaho* (http://www.idwr.state.id.us/gisdata/idtm_copy.htm), where IDTM was first described, he intended it to be based on NAD83 (NAD27 was used due to lack of available NAD83 data);
- **provisions in Idaho code** – Title 55, Chapter 17 Coordinate System of Land Description (http://www3.state.id.us/idstat/TOC/55017KTOC.html) applied to surveyors; and
- **improvements** in the NAD83 datum versus NAD27.

So far, a lot had been said about data, data integration, and consistency. Said Tony, if we are going to have data that fits together (from the largest scale to the smallest scale), some people's data needed to be changed. Since the surveyors were required by law to use NAD83, their data would not be changed. Therefore, Tony proposed that the IGC recommended INSIDE Idaho provide conversion services for state and federal agencies and the private sector. The benefits included: a significant reduction in the burden on agencies to make the conversion; increased government efficiency (the conversion would be performed in a reasonable timeframe, redundant processing would be reduced); prompt availability of on-line conversion data; clean-up of state agency data directories; and consistent processing performed on all data sets. Disadvantages would include a lot of work for INSIDE Idaho, the need for all the data to be copied to some kind of medium, and unanticipated events.

Cindy Lou McDonald advised another part of the Idaho code specified the projection to the **state plane**. There was discussion on the work involved by INSIDE Idaho to make the conversions. Fred Gifford recommended a subcommittee be formed to look at the issue (including the conversion of data and technical support by INSIDE Idaho) and make recommendations. First, he said, a statewide standard (NAD83) should be adopted. Though, state laws pertaining to surveyors could not be ignored, said Liza. There was more discussion on survey data and projection.

Frank Mynar advised Idaho Power adopted a variation of the IDTM (Idaho Power Transverse Mercator) as its standard. The difference was Idaho Power's area of interest included parts of Oregon, and the IPTM did not use the metric system. He advised if the state moved to the NAD83 standard, Idaho Power would most likely have no reservations to do so, as well. However, the conversion would be done internally.

Nathan noted perhaps conversion work should be done by a contractor, rather than be done at the University of Idaho. There was more discussion on this. As a private sector representative, Diane Holloran advised she had no problem with the work being done by INSIDE Idaho.

MOTION TO ESTABLISH IDTM CONVERSION SUBCOMMITTEE

Lily Wai moved and Tony Morse seconded a motion to establish an AdHoc subcommittee to devise a recommendation for funding the Idaho Transverse Mercator conversion project, with Lily Wai as Chair, and the motion passed unanimously.

NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) State/Local/Tribal (SLT) Initiative

Tony Morse said there was money available through NASA's SLT Initiative. The purpose was several-fold: to get NASA benefits to the SLT governments; to develop the civil remote sensing community; to transfer technology to SLT governments; to stimulate the use of commercial remote sensing data; and to coordinate SLT remote sensing activities with federal activities. The idea was to develop an operational capability – either in the private sector or somewhere within government – stemming from the grant's purpose, whatever that might be, and to embark on some kind of self-funding remote sensing activity within SLT governments. A total of about five million dollars was available to be distributed among several groups, and the **grants** continued for three years. Initially, an abstract needed to be submitted for consideration for a grant. If NASA accepted the abstract, a proposal would be requested. The first-round notification was October 2001. The second-round announcement of accepted abstracts would possibly occur in November 2001. IDWR and UI received a similar grant in 1999. Bonneville County (in partnership with UI, BSU and ISU) had recently received one of NASA's SLT grants. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe also submitted an application, of which the status was not known.

Tony said that NASA preferred to focus on projects that encompassed a variety of organizations (different levels of government, private sector) with a common interest and need to be addressed. Information on these grants can be found at http://research.hq.nasa.gov/code_y/nra/current/BAA-01-OES-01/index.html.

CURRENT PROJECTS / COLLABORATION

SPOT Satellite Image Purchase

Nathan explained the state had the opportunity (due to the SPOT Image purchased in 2000) to do an add-on purchase, which would include data (2.5m resolution) that should be available via the new SPOT 5 satellite being launched in 2002. Nathan is seeking agency funding support for the statewide purchase. If ordered by December 31, 2001, panchromatic imagery would cost about $65,000 for the entire state (a discount of over 50%). Full delivery would occur in the fall of 2003, and that is when payment would be due. Anyone interested in participating should contact Nathan (208 332-1879, nbentley@adm.state.id.us).

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other new business to come before the Committee, Liza thanked those in attendance and adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m. The next Idaho Geospatial Committee meeting is scheduled for February 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Gales
ITRMC Assistant